

## **SUMMARY: AMENDMENT 4561**

**Amendment 4561 requires public disclosure of all reports delivered to the Appropriations Committee, including the justifications of the President's annual budget request, by the Department of Homeland Security unless such reports contain information that would compromise national security.**

This amendment requires the annual justifications of the President's budget request and all reports directed to be provided to the Appropriations Committees by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its component agencies in H.R. 5441 (and its accompanying reports) be posted on the Department's website within 48 hours of being delivered to the Appropriations Committees unless such information compromises national security.

### **Over 40 reports are required by the 2007 DHS appropriations bill**

The fiscal year 2007 DHS appropriations bill requires over 40 reports to be prepared and delivered to the Appropriations Committees. In addition, DHS provides the Appropriations Committees with annual justifications for the Administration's budget proposals that outline how funding has been spent in previous years and what agency priorities are planned for future years. These reports and justifications are not readily available to other members of Congress or the public.

Few of these reports contain sensitive information involving national security but do contain information that may be of interest to the public, the media or lawmakers who are not members of the Appropriations Committee.

In the interest of transparency and accountability, this information should be available. Certainly taxpayers, the media, and every member of Congress should have access to every Department's budget justifications. This is particularly true for DHS which has received considerable attention since its creation for misuse of federal homeland security funds. It is important that lawmakers are aware of actions being taken by the

Department to ensure the integrity of these funds and to demonstrate how federal resources will be spent in the future.